



**United States Army Corps of Engineers
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News Release

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Corps awards first major construction contracts for Wilmington Harbor deepening

WILMINGTON, North Carolina, August 22— Wayne Bissette, Project Manager, and Sherrell Bunn, Chief, Contracting Division, and for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, announced two contract awards today for major construction of the Wilmington Harbor deepening project.

Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company was the successful bidder for both contracts. The first, Contract DACW54-00-C-0012, in the amount of \$13,640,420, is for the Bald Head Shoal Channel Dredging Station 120+ 00 to Station 355+ 00. The second, Contract DACW54-00-C-0013, in the amount of \$56,201,150, is for Station 60+ 00 Lower Brunswick Channel to Station 55+ 00 Keg Island Dredging. The Corps-designed realignments for these portions of the channel avoid the need to blast rock, saving \$39 million in originally-projected costs.

As the station locations indicate, the harbor deepening construction will begin with the harbor bar channel, and work upriver in stages. The bar and entrance channels will be deepened from 40 to 44 feet. Work on these two areas is expected to begin in October, 2000.

The Wilmington District is currently working toward soliciting bids on a further two contracts, for work in the area of Horseshoe Shoal channel reach and a second contract for the ocean bar area.

Work to prepare for the project is already under way at Eagle Island, where construction is being done to ready the long-used disposal site so that it can receive additional dredged material resulting from the project. This first phase of Eagle Island improvements will be complete in November of 2000.

Another contract already in progress is the Island 13 environmental mitigation site. Beginning in May 2000 and working until May 2001, the Corps contractor for the project will carve and reshape the former dredged material disposal island, and move dredged material to another site across the river. The resulting area will be an estuarine habitat that will provide primary nursery areas for fish and other tidal and marine species, and a new wetlands area. The 30-acre site is intended as mitigation for about 15 acres of wetlands that will be consumed during harbor project construction.

For more information, contact Penny Schmitt at (910) 251-4626.